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AKTIVITÄT

KRAFTWERK FANZINE

This document contains the scanned pages of one of the Kraftwerk Aktivität Fanzines or complimentary publications that were produced from 1992 through to 1998.

During this time 10 Fanzines were published along with various update issues and other complimentary publications.

The scans have only been altered for clarity, with the exception of addresses and phone numbers that have now been blocked out. So please note that all errors and miss-information are as they appeared at the time of publication. Later issues tried to address the earlier problems as the production team put more stringent editorial practices in place.

AKTIVITÄT UPDATE

JANUARY 1995

Greetings,

Since issue 6's appearance in August, there has been the customary mix of rumour, rereleases and lack of any substantial activity on the Kraftwerk front...

Firstly, to answer a number of queries that have been coming in of late, it can now be confirmed that there will not be a Kraftwerk/Elektric Music convention held this year. Further details from Paul Wilkinson:

'It has been decided that there will not be a Kraftwerk convention in 1995. This decision has been made due, mainly to Kraftwerk not having released anything musically of late.

This decision will hopefully help produce a better convention in 1996, or after Kraftwerk have released their next record. I hope that the rest will produce a more interesting and varied convention next time.'

I MIGLIORI SUCCESSI DEI KRAFTWERK...

A CD featuring various cover versions of Kraftwerk tracks has been issued. It's full title is 'I Migliori Successi Dei Kraftwerk Nelle Nuove Edizioni Dei Trans World'. The CD is distributed by Discomagic. (Discomagic srl, Via Mecenate, 78/A, 20138 Milano, Italy.) Amongst the Kraftwerk tracks included are 'The Robots', 'Pocket Calculator', 'Boing Boom Tschak', 'Spaceob', 'It's More Fun To Compute', 'Trans-Europe Express', 'Computer World', 'Musique Non Stop'. The other tracks on the CD are original compositions, in a similar style. (Titles: 'Energy Overload', 'Floppy Disk', 'Warning Danger', 'The Android', 'Cybernetik Interspace', 'Biotika'.)

Rumour, rumour...

'THE MIX 2'

'The Mix 2' has come back into vogue again; has it ever been out of vogue, you may wonder?! Increasing rumours of its imminent release in Germany have been backed up with track listing also being mentioned. Amongst the tracks posited for inclusion are 'Europe Endless', 'Showroom Dummies', 'Naga Lights', 'The Telephone Call', 'Technopop'. With there having been so many rumours and the like of a 'Mix 2' in the past, this may just be the latest wait.

'TOUR DE FRANCE'

A puzzling one this... A CD version of 'Tour De France' was listed for release by EMI Electrola in Germany on November 11th, but the CD failed to materialise on the actual release date. It appears that this CD release has been on and off the release schedule for some time, Kraftwerk themselves being both the instigators of the release and the reason for its continued non-appearance. More intriguingly, it is rumoured that EMI Electrola have confirmed that the CD, if it will ever be released, will contain only one, 50+ min. mix of the track!

ELEKTRIC MUSIC ON GERMAN TV

Elektric Music appeared on a daytime German TV programme, 'Mittwoch Live' back in September. They performed three tracks; 'TV', 'State of the Art' and 'Solar Constitution', these last two titles are as yet unreleased. The line up for this appearance was Lothar Mantelheid, Ralf Beck and Emil Schult. For reasons as yet unknown, Karl Bartos was not present. There is still no news on any imminent releases from Elektric Music.

THE EARLY ALBUMS ON COMPACT DISC

In issue 6 it was noted that CD's of Kraftwerk's long-deleted early albums had been issued on bootleg CD's. We can now get an overview of how this has turned out, as there a few versions from which to pick and choose.

THE GERMANOFON RELEASES

The first ones to appear were on the Germanofon label and these featured quite faithful reproductions of the original LP sleeves, such as the same pics in the inside of the booklets as per the original LP gatefold sleeves, in the case of 'Kraftwerk' and 'Kraftwerk 2'. 'Ralf and Florian' goes one better; as well as being given the choice of displaying either the UK or German cover design (as both versions are on the CD's insert) there is also the bonus of a full colour, miniaturised reproduction of the 'musicomix' poster that came with original copies of the German LP.

The music itself has been mastered from original vinyl copies of the LP's, as the occasional snatch of static can be heard at quiet moments, though the sound quality is otherwise excellent. Only the original LP tracks were included; no bonus tracks. The CD cases are standard, with the familiar dark grey coloured trays.

The most intriguing aspect of these Germanofon releases is their legality. As they are mastered from vinyl LP copies, it is presumed that they are bootlegs, as if it was some kind of official re-issue, surely they would be mastered from the original tapes? However, these CD's have been stocked by shops such as HMV, Adrian's etc. Now, large chainstores such as HMV are not prone to stocking bootleg material, which does of course suggest that they do have some kind of official or semi-legality or else that HMV have been suckered into stocking them!

One point to note; copies of the 'Ralf and Florian' release come complete with a miniaturised copy of the musicomix poster, though you are advised to shop around as sometimes they don't have this; the copies in HMV for instance, appear to be without this additional insert.

THE LATER RELEASES

No sooner had the Germanofon releases started appearing in this country than a second set from a different source appeared; however, as well as the three Kraftwerk LP's, this series also saw the pro-Kraftwerk 'Tone Float' album by Organisation make its first appearance on CD. These CD's can be distinguished from the Germanofon releases by these easy to spot features:

1) each of the CD's features an extra bonus track 2) the CD cases have clear plastic trays, not dark grey ones, through which additional artwork can be seen.

These CD's do not have label / catalogue numbers as such. The packaging is based on the original LP's but there are some discrepancies that make them a little less satisfying than the Germanofon releases. (For instance, the 'Ralf and Florian' CD does not feature the 'musicomix' insert.)

Judging by the 'Ralf and Florian' release, these later issues are of slightly poorer quality; there seems to be more surface noise present here, so they are obviously not direct copies of the Germanofon issues.

The bonus tracks on the three Kraftwerk CD's are all from the 1975 'Cologne 75' bootleg CD. The extra track on 'Kraftwerk' is 'Ruckzuck', 'Kraftwerk 2' has 'Kometenmelodie 1 and 2', while 'Ralf and Florian' features 'Autobahn'.

The 'Tone Float' CD retains the original, rather unattractive, sleeve art, though an additional KRAFTWERK-ORGANISATION title bar at the top of the cover makes the connection clear for the uninitiated. This CD also features an extra bonus track; 'Vor Dem Blauen Bock', which turns out to be 'Ruckstöss Gondoliers', from the 1971 Beat Club TV appearance. Again, it is mastered from an LP but remains fine.

EVEN MORE...

Just when you thought it was all over... Another version of the 'Kraftwerk' CD has appeared. On an Italian label, Crows, the packaging is once again based on the original LP artwork and is in the main well reproduced. The traffic cone logo is reproduced in pink this time though, unlike the previous two CD's which are red. Musically, it only has the same four tracks as per the original LP, so there's no bonus tracks. Interestingly, this CD appears to have been mastered from a cassette copy of the album rather than a vinyl copy, so there is no static and such, but tape hiss.

THE CLEOPATRA LABEL

The American label Cleopatra/CEMA Special Markets seems to be trying to repackaging what limited amounts of Kraftwerk material they have rights to release in as many permutations as possible it seems. Thus far, we've had two re-issues of 'Radioactivity' on CD, one of those with altered, re-coloured, sleeve packaging, 'Trans-Europe Express' and 'The Man Machine' CD's in new sleeve designs, two compilations, 'The Model' and 'Showroom Dummies', a budget price re-issue in totally different sleeve design of one of these compilations ('The Model') and now a box-set compilation featuring the three CD's, 'Radioactivity', 'Trans-Europe Express' and 'The Man Machine', under the title of 'The Capitol Years'.

And it ain't cheap either! Recently spotted selling for between £42-£45 in London. So, what do you get for your money? Well, it's not a particularly lavish 'box set', with the case housing the three CD's in a tray each, one a double, the other a single; this means that you do not get any original packaging for each of the CD's. What you do get is a 40+ page book, which has an incredible lack of photo's of any kind, just text on the electronic music scene and Kraftwerk's part thereof, a poster, with reproductions of the album covers (the nearest this package comes to featuring them) and a sticker of the 'Radioactivity' LP sleeve.

But that's not all. There are a few more appearances; a book (ISBN #: 0-96361-93-0-6) by Dave Thomson (who penned the liner notes to the Cleopatra CD re-issues) and double CD called 'Industrial Revolution' (Cleopatra, CLE07771) have been available for some time now. The double CD features one Kraftwerk track, 'Metal On Metal'. Billed as 'Everything you ever wanted to know about industrial music: From Kraftwerk to Throbbing Gristle to Ministry it's all here. Illustrated with many exclusive photographs. Companion 2-CD set contains 24 tracks featuring Ministry, Electric Hell Fire Club, Psychic TV and Laethar Strip.'

Following on from this is another book / CD package, called 'Space Danc', again written by Dave Thomson. Billed as 'the history and mystery of electronic ambient space rock', the subjects vary between Tangerine Dream, Hawkwind, Syd Barrett, Brian Eno, Coil etc. etc., also taking in Kraftwerk. The book focuses more on the earliest period of Kraftwerk's history, in contrast to the music on the accompanying CD, which is 'Spaceclub'. The CD catalogue number is CLE079162. The book features a few early period pics of Kraftwerk, mainly from the early LP covers.

Worth pointing out, the re-issued version of 'The Model' in its new sleeve design credits 'Showroom Dummies' as a 'single edit' - it is actually the full length, 6 minute, album version that appears on the CD.

CORRECTIONS

The song, 'Little Child', by Wolfgang Flür's project Yamo, was never actually issued as a record, promotional or otherwise. It was however available as a cassette, with the proceeds of its sale going to help orphans, evacuated from Bosnia to Germany. As the charity campaign is now finished, the tape is no longer available. Thanks to Klaus Zipke for the facts on this.

There have been more corrections to some of the articles in issue 6, the 1981 tour dates list, the French 'Collectors Corner' article and the Kraftwerk musical family tree. This additional information I hope to include with issue 7 when it appears.

And when will issue 7 appear, you may well ask? Well, it is some way off as yet, I would prefer not to set a firm deadline as this has caused problems with previous issues, particularly issue 6. As many of the articles that I hope to include in issue 7 require a lot of digging for information, I would prefer to hold the issue back until the articles are as complete as can be. It can be frustrating to have to include an article when you feel there is info missing and to then find more information just as it has appeared in a finished issue. So, I cannot say as yet when issue 7 will appear, but hopefully in July or August provisionally.

The Collectors Corner on bootleg CD's is also still in progress, I would hope that this will appear in the next month or two.

